

On Free Will and Eternalism

I'm going to put forward an alternative philosophy of our life in the universe, a philosophy which incorporates Eternalism but which at the same time disputes Eternalism's dominance. This idea will agree partially with Eternalism but will also assert the existence of free will. So here's what's different about a view which insists on the existence of freewill, even given the knowledge of Eternalism.

I say that there is a sub level to reality. The sub level is the real reality, it's where reality comes from in the first place. My term for this sub level is The Chaos.

Yes, I know I'm being very arrogant in writing as if I would know the real truth about how the universe works. However, if people didn't sometimes write and speak in this way how would we ever communicate ideas, one to another?

So, The Chaos.

I imagine The Chaos as an infinite eternal massive ball (or any shape you like to imagine it being) of totally, utterly random activity. It contains the stuff of which matter is made, the stuff of which energy, time and space are made. It has no linear time but it contains an infinity of timelike, spacelike, matterlike and energy-like bits and pieces which have always been in motion and always will be. It is not a closed system and so will never "run down" in the way that a closed entropic system would.

The "surface" of The Chaos is where our universe of bogus linear time is perceived (by us) to exist. The Chaos doesn't really have a surface but it helps if we imagine it having one so that we can have a position in which to locate our world.

Our world sees itself as a series of causes and effects which follow each other in a chain of events leading to our "present moment" in which we think we can decide what to do: Whether to turn left or right or choose the tea or the coffee.

Our "choice" according to Eternalism has already been made for us by the chain of events leading up to it. However, The Chaos is also connected to our "present moment" and gives us an ability to make a maverick choice which goes against all the linear cause and effect preceding it.

The Chaos is our inspiration, our ace in the hole, our secret cheat sheet, our jinx, our trick shot. The Chaos puts in a random number, a random idea, an oddball quirk thought - just when we thought everything was already done.

The Chaos was always there. The Chaos has always existed and always will. Our perception of a linear time reality is subjective and, when viewed more objectively, the apparent linear time sequence of cause and effect is eternally fixed.

EXCEPT that The Chaos, which is the real reality behind everything is also directly connected to our existence.

So, it is possible to see our existential position as at a crossroads of the meeting place, the intersection, of fixed reality and the Chaos reality.

One reality, the pseudo-linear cause and effect one, is preventing our free will. The other reality, the one which is The Chaos directly connected to our brains via the portal of the imagination, is feeding us original ideas and impulses to change and take a different path. Our resulting series of life choices are a synthesis of the no-choice reality and the choice reality converging.

The Chaos is not a god. It's a Chaos. It is amoral and non-judgemental.

The Chaos makes possible everything which exists, regardless of whether we judge each thing to be good or bad.

The Chaos is not Brahma or Vishnu or Shiva but, nevertheless, out of sheer contrariness on my part, I will leave you with Ralph Waldo Emerson's poem "Brahma":

Brahma

BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
I am the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

Published in November 1857 on page 48 of The Atlantic Monthly

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

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By C. W. Holmes

THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN BOSWELL.

I WAS just going to say, when I was interrupted, that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula: $2+2=4$. Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression $a+b=c$. We are mere operatives, empirics, and egotists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.

They all stared. There is a divinity student lately come among us to whom I commonly address remarks like the above, allowing him to take a certain share in the conversation, so far as assent or pertinent questions are involved. He abused his liberty on this occasion by presuming to say that Leibnitz had the same observation.—No, sir, I replied, he has not. But he said a mighty good thing about

mathematics, that sounds something like it, and you found it, *not in the original*, but quoted by Dr. Thomas Reid. I will tell the company what he did say, one of these days.

—If I belong to a Society of Mutual Admiration?—I blush to say that I do not at this present moment. I once did, however. It was the first association to which I ever heard the term applied; a body of scientific young men in a great foreign city who admired their teacher, and to some extent each other. Many of them deserved it; they have become famous since. It amuses me to hear the talk of one of those beings described by Thackeray—

"Letters four do form his name"—

about a social development which belongs to the very noblest stage of civilization. All generous companies of artists, authors,